

Voicing Your Concerns: Part Two – Treating Dysphonia

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Shouting and screaming?

Hoarse voice?

No voice?

Sore throat?

Does it matter??

Yes! Voice problems in children aren't well recognised. Read on to find out what causes voice problems, the impact of [voice disorders](#) and what happens when you see a [speech pathologist](#) (she can help!).



<http://www.thehealthsite.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/shouting.jpg>

What's causing my child's voice problem?

Many things can cause or contribute to voice problems, including:

- structural, medical or neurological issues of the respiratory (breathing) system or head and neck
- misuse or excessive voice use
- mental or emotional factors



<http://www.johansamson.be/kind1.jpg>

What's the impact of a voice disorder?

Like any communication disorder, a voice problem has the potential to affect **social, emotional and educational development**. **Voice disorders** may **limit your child's ability to express themselves** at home and school or **restrict their participation** in the classroom, on the playground or sports oval or at home, and **reduce future professional opportunities**.



http://wtalks.com/sites/default/files/imagecache/width_670_nowater/speak/111/imagepost/333_18.jpg

Our voices are unique and integral to our identity, with an **abnormal voice often drawing unwanted attention**. Impairments can influence **self-esteem**, and children may experience sadness, anger and frustration among other emotions.

What will happen when I see a speech pathologist?

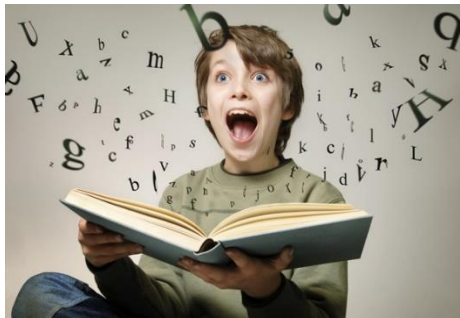
1. **Assessment** – The **speech pathologist** will ask questions about your child's voice problem, how your child uses his voice, your child's health, milestones, allergies and medications and so on. She will ask about the impact that your child's voice is having on his participation in home and school life. The clinician will also listen carefully to and analyse your child's voice during a fun activity.
2. **Intervention** – If you and the speech pathologist decide that therapy is appropriate, a combination of direct and indirect approaches will be offered.



<http://www.sensationalkids.com.au/speech-therapy/>

Direct – The speech pathologist teaches your child how to use his voice efficiently and safely, eg. through correct breathing, warming up and cooling down the voicebox, using an ‘easy’ voice.

Indirect – The clinician will discuss with you how to look after your child’s voice (previously called vocal hygiene) and provide good role models for healthy voice use. For example, if your child yells a lot, you might introduce a simple visual volume scale at home and all family members can practise “dialling down” the loudness of their voices to “indoor voice” level. It’s likely that the speech pathologist will involve your child’s teacher to ensure healthy voice use at school too.



<http://creativecommunicators.net/speech-therapy/>

It’s crucial that **home practice** is completed regularly. This ensures that your child uses his voice well in the settings where it matters most – childcare/school and home – and not just in the clinic.



<https://www.cvetitaherbal.com/wp-content/uploads/deca-1.png>

If you have any concerns about your child’s voice, [call 9899 5494](tel:98995494) today to book an appointment with our voice specialist, Nicola Anglin.

By Nicola Anglin (Speech Pathologist)